

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (previously amended): A reticle transfer system comprising:

a fork arm comprising a base, and a plurality of tines for supporting a reticle, each of said tines having a base end at which the tine is integral with and extends from said base, and a distal end remote from the base end;

a linear carrier having a gripper for temporarily holding the reticle transferred by the fork arm;

a plurality of position sensors disposed on said base ends of the tines of said fork arm, respectively, so as to together enable the detection of whether a reticle is properly positioned relative to the tines of the fork arm; and

an alarm operatively connected to said position sensors so as to generate an alarm signal when the position sensors detect a reticle on the fork arm that is improperly positioned relative to the tines of the fork arm.

Claim 2 (canceled).

Claim 3 (previously presented): A reticle transfer system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the position sensors comprise a plurality of photo sensors disposed, respectively, at the base ends of said tines.

Claim 4 (previously amended): A reticle transfer and storage system comprising:

a reticle library;

a plurality of reticle cassettes supported in said reticle library;

a fork arm disposed adjacent said cassettes, said fork arm comprising a base, and a plurality of tines for supporting a reticle, each of said tines having a base end at which the tine is integral with and extends from said base, and a distal end remote from the base end, and said fork arm being movable horizontally and vertically in a working range that encompasses the interior of each of said cassettes so as to be capable of withdrawing a reticle stored in any of said cassettes;

a linear carrier disposed outside of said library and movable to a position within the working range of said fork arm;

a plurality of position sensors disposed on said base ends of the tines of said fork arm, respectively, so as to together enable the detection of whether a reticle is properly positioned relative to the tines of the fork arm; and

an alarm operatively connected to said position sensors so as to generate an alarm signal when the position sensors detect a reticle on the fork arm that is improperly positioned relative to the tines of the fork arm.

Claim 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (previously presented): A reticle transfer and storage system as claimed in claim 4, wherein the position sensors comprise a plurality of photo sensors disposed, respectively, at the base ends of said tines.